

CLAIMS

1. A method for an interactive media services system to provide media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

implementing an interactive media guide;
implementing said client device to present said interactive media guide to said user;
providing a system operator with an interface to said programmable media services server; and

providing control options within said interface to allow said system operator to set a plurality of parameters concerning bandwidth usage.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said system operator has the ability through configuration of said plurality of parameters concerning bandwidth usage to dictate the termination procedure of a media session.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said termination procedure involves said interactive media services system keeping said media session active until the end of a rental duration period assigned to said media session independent of the behavior of any of a plurality of client device and system variables.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein said termination procedure involves said interactive media services system terminating said media session if one of a plurality of client device and system variables correspond to one of said plurality of parameters concerning bandwidth usage.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein one of said plurality of client device and system variables comprises a timeout, said timeout occurring when said media session has been in a pause state for a period equal to a pause timeout parameter configured as one of said plurality of parameters concerning bandwidth usage.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein said period is equal to said pause timeout parameter, client device is forced to present a stop state and said media session is halted.

7. The method of claim 4, wherein one of said plurality of client device and system variables comprises a timeout, said timeout occurring when said media session has been in a stop state for a period equal to a stop timeout parameter configured as one of said plurality of parameters concerning bandwidth usage.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said period is equal to said stop timeout parameter, forcing client device to present a main screen of said interactive media guide and said media session is fully terminated, allowing bandwidth to be allocated elsewhere.

5 9. The method of claim 4, wherein one of said plurality of client device and system variables comprises a cancellation by said user, after a cancellation period, causing said media session to immediately be terminated.

10 10. The method of claim 9, wherein said cancellation period is compared to one of said plurality of parameters concerning bandwidth usage regarding a no charge cancellation period, if said cancellation period is less than said no charge cancellation period a purchase fee assigned to said user for said media session is erased from billing record.

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11. A method for an interactive media services system to provide media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

providing a system operator with an interface to said programmable media services server; and

providing control options within said interface to allow said system operator to configure a plurality of control mechanisms available to said user during an active session, wherein said plurality of control mechanisms are grouped into sets to form a plurality of options suites.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said system operator has the ability to configure which of said plurality of options suites are available to said client device.

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13. A method for an interactive media services system to provide media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

implementing an interactive media guide;

implementing said client device to present said interactive media guide to said user;

providing said interactive media service system with information of a plurality of dynamic variables regarding an active session of said media; and

providing said interactive media service system with the ability to configure said client device with a control options suite for said active session of said media.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein said plurality of dynamic variables comprises at least one of a remaining rental duration, a remaining play time, and a Media On Demand (MOD) period equal to the difference of said remaining rental duration and remaining play time.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein said control options suite dictates a plurality of trick modes available to said user during said active session of said media to be implemented on said active session of said media.

16. The method of claim 15, where in said plurality of trick modes comprises at least one of play, stop, fast forward, rewind, and pause.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein said control options suite dictates a said user shall be warned by said interactive media guide of said remaining rental duration and said remaining play time for a requested session of said media, during said requested session said plurality of trick modes are available to said user and completion of presentation of said media is left to the discretion of said user.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein said control options suite dictates all said trick modes are to be available to said user until said MOD period expires, after warning is posted regarding expiration of said MOD period, all said trick modes are made unavailable to said user such that said media of a requested session can be presented in its entirety.

19. The method of claim 15, wherein said control options suite dictates during a requested session said trick modes are available to said user, if said MOD period expires before the end of said requested session said user is warned by said interactive media guide that MOD period has expired, and after warning is posted, said trick modes are available to said user and completion of presentation of said media is left to the discretion of said user.

20. A method for an interactive media services system to provide media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

- implementing a memory on said client device;
- implementing a memory on said programmable media services server device; and
- providing said interactive media service system with knowledge of a plurality of dynamic variables regarding an active session of said media.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein said plurality of dynamic variables comprise a remaining rental duration, a remaining play time, and a Media On Demand (MOD) period equal to the difference of said remaining rental duration and remaining play time.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein said plurality of dynamic variables are calculated by said client device and stored in said memory on said client device.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein said plurality of dynamic variables are calculated by said programmable media services device and stored in said memory on said programmable media services device.

24. A method for an interactive media services system to provide media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

implementing an interactive media guide;
implementing said client device to present said interactive media guide to said user;
providing a system operator with an interface to said programmable media services server; and

providing control options within said interface to allow said system operator to configure a plurality of rental options.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein said plurality of rental options comprise a plurality of rental duration periods, a set of a plurality of functionality controls available during an active media session, and a plurality of messaging available from said interactive media guide.

26. A method for an interactive media services system to provide media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

5 implementing an interactive media guide;

implementing said client device to present said interactive media guide to said user;

providing control options within said interface to allow a system operator to configure a plurality of rental options; and

10 implementing said interactive media guide to present to said user said plurality of rental options available as configured by said system operator for a requested session of said media.

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27. A method for an interactive media services system to provide media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

5 implementing an interactive media guide;
 implementing said client device to present said interactive media guide to said user;
 providing a system operator with an interface to said programmable media services server;

10 providing control options within said interface to allow said system operator to configure a plurality of rental options available to said user; and

 implementing said interactive media service system such that said plurality of rental options can be executed by said user in a requested active media session.

28. The method of claim 27, wherein selection by said user of one of said plurality of rental options results in particular level of functionality and said level of functionality is closely related the monetary cost assigned to said requested active media session.

29. The method of claim 27, wherein one of said plurality of rental options comprises a single viewing of said requested active media session without any of a plurality of trick modes, said trick modes comprising play, rewind, fast forward, pause, and stop.

30. The method of claim 27, wherein one of said plurality of rental options comprises a rental duration period of said requested active media session to be an integer multiplied by a title length of said media.

31. The method of claim 27, wherein one of said plurality of rental options comprises a rental duration period of said requested active media session to be a period of standard time, said period of standard time comprising a plurality of hours, a day, and a week.

32. The method of claim 27, wherein one of said plurality of rental options comprises allowing said user to purchase an extended rental period if a rental duration has expired before said user is able to watch said active media session in its entirety.

33. The method of claim 27, wherein one of said plurality of rental options comprises a limited functionality viewing of said requested active media session with a plurality of limits on any of a plurality of trick modes, said trick modes comprising play, rewind, fast forward, pause, and stop.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein said plurality of limits comprises access to only a subset of said plurality of trick modes, restrictions on the amount to which one of said plurality of trick modes can be used, and restrictions on the duration to which one of said plurality of trick modes can be used.

35. The method of claim 27, wherein one of said plurality of rental options comprises a full functionality viewing of said requested active media session without a limit on any of a plurality of trick modes, said trick modes comprising play, rewind, fast forward, pause, and stop.

36. The method of claim 27, wherein one of said plurality of rental options comprises an ability to watch a media several times during said active media session.

37. The method of claim 27, wherein one of said plurality of rental options comprises said interactive media guide presenting an indication during said requested active media session as to why a functionality requested by said user is not available under current said plurality of rental options associated with said requested active media session.

38. The method of claim 37, wherein said indication allows said user to purchase functionality requested that is not available under current said plurality of rental options associated with said requested active media session.

39. The method of claim 27, wherein one of said plurality of rental options comprises said user being able to watch said requested active media session without an insertion of promotional media.

40. The method of claim 27, wherein one of said plurality of rental options comprises said user being able to watch said requested active media session without an insertion of a plurality of trailers.

41. The method of claim 27, wherein one of said plurality of rental options comprises said user being able to watch said requested active media session with the insertion of a plurality of trailers.

42. A method for an interactive media services system to provide media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

providing a system operator with an interface to said programmable media services server;

providing control options within said interface to allow said system operator to configure a session recreation procedure to be used after an abnormal session termination; and

implementing said session recreation procedure with the interactive media services system, said session recreation procedure comprising determining the fault that created said abnormal session termination, instructing client device to resume session, and waiting on a request from said user to resolve said abnormal session termination.

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